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Anglicanism in the British Empire, 1829-1910

Stewart J Brown

In 1849, Daniel Wilson, the Evangelical Anglican bishop of Calcutta and metropolitan of India, published a *Charge* to his clergy. He began by observing how God had preserved Britain from violent upheaval during the revolutionary year of 1848, and indeed, from the successive waves of revolution that had swept Europe since 1789. However, he continued, there was still greater evidence of the providential purpose for Britain. This was the extraordinary expansion of the British Empire over the past sixty years. Not only had Britain been spared revolution, but it had been 'raised during this very period to the possession of the most wonderful empire, and the widest influence which the world has ever seen, either in ancient or modern times'. 'And for what purpose?' he continued, 'Why has India been given to us, as it were by miracle? Why are our Colonies extended over the universe?' There could be but one answer: 'that it may be seen whether we will communicate to India and the world the immense blessings of the Gospel which have been committed to our trust'. And it was the Anglican Church establishment in India, he further maintained, that was the only sure way of fulfilling this trust. The Anglican Church, moreover, would help consolidate the political Empire in India. Through its ministry, 'the Native population would be permanently gained over to our Empire; and, instead of our being in danger from half-educated, babbling Metaphysicians . . . we should have intelligent, attached and obedient Christian subjects'.¹

¹ D. Wilson, A Charge delivered to the Clergy of the Four Dioceses of Calcutta, Madras, Bombay, and Colombo (London, 1849), pp. 10, 16, 21.

Wilson's *Charge* reflected a prevalent mid nineteenth-century Anglican discourse. For many Anglicans, as Rowan Strong has shown, the expansion of the Empire from the 1780s, and especially the conquest of much of India, was inexplicable in worldly terms.² For them, the British Empire was clearly destined by God to be for the wider world what the ancient Roman Empire had been for the Mediterranean world – the means by which Christianity would be spread. The real strength of Britain's Empire, they believed, lay in its Christianity, especially its Anglicanism, which united Church and state for a higher aim. The expanding Empire provided the social and political framework for the wider mission of the Anglican Church. The Empire, moreover, gave Anglicanism a renewed sense of purpose, particularly in the aftermath of the 'constitutional revolution' of 1828-32, which had largely ended the confessional state in the United Kingdom and weakened the influence and authority of the established Church of England.

The Constitutional Revolution of 1828-32 and Imperial Anglicanism

Our period opens with the Church of England under serious threat at home. The constitutional revolution of 1828-32, which is explored in another chapter, undermined the old alliance of Church and state. The repeal of the Test and Corporation Acts in 1828, Catholic Emancipation in 1829, and the parliamentary Reform Act of 1832, brought an end to the confessional state, and its principle that positions of trust in the state must be reserved for members of the established Church. The constitutional changes were followed in the 1830s by popular calls to abolish the tithes and church rates which maintained the Church of

²² R. Strong, 'The Church of England and the British Imperial State: Anglican Metropolitan Sermons of the 1850s', in H. M. Carey and J. Gascoigne, Church and State in Old and New Worlds (Leiden, 2011), pp. 183-205.

England, while the reformed Parliament soon decided that it would provide no additional grants of public money for the Church.

Leaders of the Church of England responded vigorously to the new political order. During the 1830s, the Church adopted a series of reforms, aimed at strengthening its pastoral ministry, eliminating pluralism and sinecures, and building new churches and schools. A key figure in the reform movement was Charles James Blomfield, the High Church bishop of London, who initiated a church building programme in the capital that was soon emulated across the country, with hundreds of new Anglican churches erected by voluntary donations. The 1830s also witnessed the beginnings of what Arthur Burns has termed the ‘diocesan revival’, by which a new breed of energetic and talented bishops, among them Blomfield and Samuel Wilberforce of Oxford, became more regular in their visitations, improved discipline and pastoral care among their diocesan clergy, revived rural deaneries, and established diocesan societies for church building, school building, and support of overseas missions.³ Another expression of Anglican renewal was the Oxford, or Tractarian Movement, which aimed at recovering a sense of the Church of England as a branch of the ancient catholic and apostolic church. The Oxford divines emphasised the authority of the bishops, the disciplined Christian life, and the spiritual independence of the Church of England from state control. There was also a new zeal among Anglican Evangelicals, with many embracing millenarianism and the study of biblical prophecy, alongside the older Evangelical emphases on the atonement, conversion, and social activism.

The spirit of Anglican renewal found expression in 1841 in three initiatives linked to the expanding British Empire. First, there was the Niger expedition, intended to provide a

³ A. Burns, The Diocesan Revival in the Church of England c.1800-1870 (Oxford, 1999).

new beginning for the anti-slavery campaign. In 1807, largely as a result of the political campaign led by the Evangelical Anglican William Wilberforce, Parliament had abolished the slave trade, and in 1833 Parliament enacted the end of slavery within the British Empire. Beginning in 1808, Britain had stationed a West African Squadron of warships to intercept slave ships from Africa and liberate their human cargoes. Although it numbered about 30 warships by the later 1830s, the Squadron was largely ineffective against the faster slave ships and managed to intercept only about ten per cent of the human cargoes. The slaves that British warships did recapture were landed at the British colony of Sierra Leone, where many found their way into one of the colony's Anglican churches. But there was consternation among British Christians over the continuing slave trade and the small numbers being rescued.

The Evangelical Anglican, Thomas Fowell Buxton, was successor to Wilberforce as parliamentary leader of the anti-slavery movement. During the 1830s, Buxton developed a plan to eradicate the slave trade at its source, by ending the tribal warfare and anarchic conditions in the African interior that led to the capture of slaves. Buxton's plan involved developing settled agriculture in the African interior, including palm oil and cotton farms, which would provide alternative occupations to tribal warfare and human trafficking. The Niger River and its tributaries would form a great artery for peaceful trade. Along its banks there would be farming villages, with churches and schools for the spread of Christianity and civilization. 'It is', Buxton famously asserted, 'the Bible and the plough that must regenerate Africa'.⁴ He enlisted the support of leading public figures, including Prince Albert, and funds were raised for an expedition up the Niger River, to map its course and set up model farms.

⁴ Quoted in C. P. Groves, The Planting of Christianity in Africa, 4 vols. (London, 1948-58), ii, 6.

In April 1841, the expedition, including missionaries, scientists, and agricultural experts, began its journey up the Niger in three specially designed iron steamships. The expedition, however, failed disastrously. The Europeans were devastated by illness; of the 145 Europeans on the expedition, 130 fell ill of fever, and 40 died. After establishing only one model farming village, the expedition had to be withdrawn. None the less, despite the failure, a new Christian imperial ideal was defined – that Africa could be redeemed and slavery ended through commerce and Christianity. There would be further expeditions to the Niger in the 1850s, and for many Anglicans a vital purpose of the Empire would be to end slavery.

The second event of 1841 expressing the spirit of imperial Anglicanism was the establishment of the Jerusalem bishopric. This was a joint venture of the Church of England and the Protestant Church in Prussia. The stated aim of the joint bishopric was to offer protection and support to Protestants residing in Palestine and the Near East. However, there were scarcely any Protestants in the region, and in truth the Jerusalem bishopric was entangled with the ‘Eastern Question’ and European efforts to carve out spheres of influence within the weakening Ottoman Empire. Britain and Prussia jointly endowed the bishopric, and the two monarchs agreed to alternate in nominating the bishop. Most Tractarians opposed the joint bishopric, believing that the Prussian state Church had been corrupted in doctrine and that no good would come of such cooperation. Anglican Evangelicals, however, warmly supported the venture. For many, Scripture foretold that the restoration of the Jews to the Holy Land would be a sign of Christ’s imminent return in glory. The Jerusalem bishopric, they believed, would promote the return of the Jews, and open them to Christian influence and conversion, in preparation for the Second Advent. Here was further evidence of the providential purpose of the British Empire. ‘It is surely’, observed the Evangelical Lord Ashley in 1839, ‘a high privilege reserved to our Church and nation to plant the true cross on

the Holy Hill of Zion; to carry back the faith we thence received from the apostles; and . . . “light such a candle in Jerusalem, as by God’s blessing shall never be put out””.⁵

A third major event of 1841 was the establishment of the Colonial Bishopricks Fund.⁶ This was largely the initiative of Bishop Blomfield, who in 1840 published a letter to the archbishop of Canterbury, William Howley, pleading for the provision of settled episcopal government in all Britain’s colonies of settlement. At this time, there were only ten overseas Anglican bishoprics in the Empire, and Blomfield insisted that the Anglican Church was failing to meet its imperial responsibilities.⁷ In response to Blomfield’s appeal, the archbishop convened a large public meeting in April 1841 in London. In his address opening the meeting, Howley emphasized the value of colonial bishoprics, including ‘the improved condition of society in every Colony where Episcopal authority has been established within the last twenty years’. Blomfield gave the second address, highlighting the prospect of episcopal government in uniting the Empire on the basis of ‘Apostolic order and discipline’. For another speaker, Charles Sumner, the Evangelical bishop of Winchester, ‘we have been too regardless of Christianising our colonies on any plan’. ‘We have sent our ships’, he asserted, ‘but we have not sent our religion’.⁸ The meeting agreed to establish a Colonial

⁵ Quoted in D. Lewis, The Origins of Christian Zionism: Lord Shaftesbury and Evangelical Support for a Jewish Homeland (Cambridge, 2010), p. 165.

⁶ R. Strong, Anglicanism and the British Empire c.1700-1850 (Oxford, 2007), pp. 198-221

⁷ C. J. Blomfield, A Letter to his Grace the Lord Archbishop of Canterbury, upon the Formation of a Fund for Endowing Additional Bishoprics in the Colonies (London, 1840).

⁸ Proceedings of a Meeting of the Clergy and Laity ... for the Purpose of Raising a Fund towards the Endowment of Additional Colonial Bishoprics (London, 1841), pp. 4, 6, 7, 18.

Bishoprics Fund as a voluntary Church of England association, under the direction of the bishops and with the aim of raising money to endow new colonial bishoprics. The High Church politician, William Ewart Gladstone, was appointed one of the three treasurers, a position he would hold for the next fifty years. A little over a month after the creation of the Fund, the Church of England bishops met at Lambeth and decided on the first six colonial bishoprics to be created.

The Colonial Bishoprics Fund proved highly successful at fund raising, and within fifty years, the number of colonial dioceses grew from ten to eighty-two.⁹ The consecrations of colonial bishops now became major public events, held in Westminster Abbey, St Paul's Cathedral, or Canterbury Cathedral. The consecration in 1847 in Westminster Abbey of a new bishop of Cape Town, along with three new Australian bishops, was the first in the new style and it generated great public interest. The colonial bishops were closely identified with the imperial state. Not only did they carry royal letters patent, but they normally sailed as guests of the Royal Navy. In 1849, a Council for Colonial Bishoprics was created, made up of all the bishops and archbishops of the United Church of England and Ireland. The Anglican commitment to Empire found further expression in 1848 with the foundation of the College of St Augustine's, Canterbury, for the training of colonial clergy and missionaries.¹⁰ The college was a High Church initiative, and was supported by voluntary donations. It was built on the site of the former monastery of St Augustine, which one of the college founders, Edward Coleridge, described as the 'Site of Sites', reflecting both the sixth-century mission

⁹ W. F. France, The Oversea Episcopate: Centenary History of the Colonial Bishoprics Fund 1841-1941 (London, 1941).

¹⁰ H. Carey, God's Empire: Religion and Colonialism in the British World, c.1801-1908 (Cambridge, 2011), pp. 271-86.

of St Augustine to England and the nineteenth-century British mission to the world.¹¹ There was some opposition to the college. The Church Missionary Society [CMS] had since 1826 maintained a missionary training college in Islington, and could not see the need for another college. Many suspected that the real aim of St Augustine's was to spread Tractarian teachings to the Empire. However, St Augustine's gained influential support, especially from the Society for the Propagation of the Gospel [SPG]. Over the next century, St Augustine's College sent some 1,000 Anglican workers to the colonies and mission fields, as well as educating a large number of Africans, Asians, and Americans.

The decade of the 1840s was, according to the historian Hans Cnattingius, one of 'epoch-making importance in the evolution of Anglicanism into a World Church'. 'The heads of the Church of England', he added, 'had shown that, as builders of a spiritual empire, they were worthy to take their place beside the builders of the political empire.'¹² After the constitutional revolution of 1828-32 and the weakening of the Church-state alliance, the Church of England now found a new confidence, which was closely linked to the expanding empire. In the Niger expedition, Jerusalem bishopric, and Colonial Bishoprics Fund, the Anglican Church renewed its sense of mission, amid visions of a providential purpose behind imperial expansion. Voluntary giving to the two main Anglican missionary societies, the SPG and the CMS, increased dramatically, from a total of £63,248 in 1830, to £184,756 in 1846,

¹¹ Quoted in G. A. Bremner, Imperial Gothic: Religious Architecture and High Anglican Culture in the British Empire, c.1840-1870 (New Haven, 2013), p. 332.

¹² H. Cnattingius, Bishops and Societies: A Study of Anglican Colonial and Missionary Expansion 1698-1850 (London, 1952), p. 204-5.

to £224,330 in 1852.¹³ By 1851, there were 1,183 Anglican clergymen serving in the British colonies and dependencies, representing some 15% of the total number of Anglican clergy.¹⁴

The Anglican imperial commitments reflected the Evangelical passion for souls and millenarian beliefs, as well as High Church and Tractarian emphases on the bishops as the successors to the apostles and the Anglican Church as the repository of divine truth.

Anglicanism in the Settlement Colonies

During the nineteenth century, the world was transformed by what the historian James Belich has described as the ‘Settler Revolution’, a movement comparable in its global impact to the Industrial Revolution or the Democratic Revolution. Between 1815 and 1930, an estimated twelve million people emigrated permanently from the British Isles to North America, Australasia, and South Africa. They formed an English-speaking population in the world which grew sixteen-fold between 1790 and 1930, from about 12 million to some 200 million.¹⁵ A large proportion of these English-speaking migrants went to the British settlement colonies in Canada, Australia, New Zealand, and South Africa. They formed what in 1868 the English politician and author, Charles Dilke, famously called the ‘Greater Britain’.

¹³ B. Tennant, Corporate Holiness: Pulpit Preaching and the Church of England Missionary Societies, 1760-1870 (Oxford, 2013), p. 214.

¹⁴ M. Gladwyn, Anglican Clergy in Australia 1788-1850: Building a British World (Woodbridge, 2015), pp. 3-4, 15-16.

¹⁵ J. Belich, Replenishing the Earth: The Settler Revolution and the Rise of the Anglo-World, 1783-1939 (Oxford, 2009), pp. 58, 4.

From the beginnings of British colonialism in the seventeenth century, the Church of England endeavoured to provide colonists with clergy, churches, and schools – and this continued into the nineteenth century. The first Anglican clergy in the colonies were chaplains (so designated as they were outside the ordinary jurisdictions of parish clergy), and by the late eighteenth century chaplains were normally appointed by the Colonial Office, and were under the jurisdiction of the governor. A chaplain, Richard Johnson, accompanied the first fleet of convicts and settlers to Australia in 1788, and from 1788 to 1820, fourteen chaplains served the new Australian colonies; they were paid by the Crown, which also paid for new churches. Colonial chaplains accompanied the first British settlers in the Cape Colony in South Africa after it was taken from the Dutch in 1806. There were army chaplains accompanying the regiments and military garrisons in the colonies; the military chaplains often took on additional roles as schoolmasters and preachers to the colonists. By a parliamentary act of 1825, British consuls serving overseas were empowered to appoint chaplains, provided they had been duly licensed by the bishop of London. The Anglican missionary societies, the SPG, the CMS, and the Society for Promoting Christian Knowledge (SPCK), also sent chaplains to work among the settler populations.

There were, however, concerns over such a loose and unsystematic provision of clergy in the settlement colonies, and a belief that a scattering of chaplains could not meet the long-term spiritual needs of the settlers. For many Anglicans, it was imperative to bring to the colonies the full benefits of the established Church of England – including endowments, episcopal government, diocesan and parish structures, schools and colleges, and a close alliance of Church and state. This, some claimed, had been the lesson of the American Revolution and the loss of the North American colonies in 1783, which they argued would not have happened had the colonists been instructed under a proper Anglican establishment with colonial bishops. But planting established Churches proved difficult in the colonies –

where there were no ecclesiastical courts, no tithes or historic endowments to support an ecclesiastical establishment, and few colonial bishops before the 1840s.

None the less, efforts were made. In Canada, there was an established Anglican Church from 1787, when in the aftermath of the American Revolution Charles Inglis was consecrated bishop of Nova Scotia, with episcopal authority extending over the whole of British North America. In 1791, with the Constitution Act for British North America, the British Parliament set aside one-seventh of the land in Upper and Lower Canada (the so-called 'clergy reserves') as an endowment for the new Anglican establishment. It was a significant expression of state commitment. From 1814, moreover, the imperial state provided a grant to the SPG for the support of additional Anglican clergy in Canada.

By the early 1820s, however, many Canadian colonists, including the large Catholic majority in Lower Canada and the large number of Methodists and Presbyterians in Upper Canada, were opposing the Anglican establishment in a religiously diverse Canada, where Anglicans were a minority. They objected to the exclusive grant of the 'clergy reserves' to the Anglican Church. In response to the widespread popular opposition to the idea of an established Church, the imperial state began withdrawing its financial support from the Canadian Anglican Church. In 1831, the government announced that over the next four years it would end its grant to the SPG for the support of Anglican clergy. And in 1840, the imperial Parliament passed an Act which divided the clergy reserves among the different denominations in Canada, with half the land to be divided between the Anglicans and the Presbyterians, and the rest distributed among the other denominations according to their numbers. But by now the idea of land grants to any Church had become highly unpopular in Canada; indeed, the clergy reserves had formed one of the grievances behind the Rebellion of 1837-38 in Upper Canada. Following the Union of Upper and Lower Canada in 1840, and the granting of responsible government to Canada from 1849, the imperial Parliament left the

question of the clergy reserves to the Canadian legislature. In 1854, the Canadian legislature secularized the clergy reserves, effectively disestablishing the Anglican Church in Canada.¹⁶

There was a similar story in Australia. In 1826, the British Government, acting on the Canadian model, endowed the Anglican Church one-seventh of all Crown lands in New South Wales for the provision of parish churches, clergy, and schools. By 1829, nearly 420,000 acres had been granted to the Anglican establishment in Australia. However, there was also growing opposition to these land grants among the colonists, and in 1829 the governor suspended any new land grants. A few years later, in 1833, it was agreed that the lands previously given to the Anglican Church would now be divided among the main denominations in the colony, including the Catholic Church. The governor of New South Wales, Sir Richard Bourke, observed in 1833 that in rejecting the idea of an established Church 'the inclination of these Colonists . . . keeps pace with the Spirit of the Age'.¹⁷ In 1836, the New South Wales colonial legislature passed a Church Act, by which the state provided financial subsidies to all Christian denominations, according to how much they could raise themselves. Similar Church Acts were passed by the colonial legislatures in the other three Australian colonies by 1847. 'The Church Acts', Michael Gladwyn has observed, ' . . . enshrined religious pluralism and ended Anglican pretensions to establishment'.¹⁸

As the imperial and colonial governments moved away from policies of endowing Anglican establishments in the settlement colonies, the colonial Anglican Churches had to develop their own forms of support and governance. The colonial clergy were often more than willing to do so, being at great distances from the metropole, dependent on local

¹⁶ A. Wilson, The Clergy Reserves of Upper Canada (Ottawa, 1969).

¹⁷ Quoted in G. P. Shaw, Patriarch and Patriot: William Grant Broughton 1788-1853 (Melbourne, 1978), p. 79.

¹⁸ Gladwyn, Anglican Clergy in Australia, pp. 7-20; quotation on p. 16.

communities, and working in very different environments. Some colonial Church leaders, moreover, were attracted to Tractarian ecclesiology, with its high views of episcopacy, its commitment to the practices of the early Church, and its emphasis on the Church's spiritual independence. From the 1840s, the colonial Churches began developing forms of synodical Church government, by which they would largely govern themselves through their bishops, supported by diocesan and provincial synods (with lay representation), and by which they would frame their own constitutions, elect their bishops, and enforce ecclesiastical discipline.

The Church in New Zealand was the first to develop independent synodical government. The Anglican mission to New Zealand began in 1814. Following the establishment of British sovereignty in 1840, the first Anglican bishop of New Zealand, George Augustus Selwyn – young, confident and athletic, with High Church convictions – was consecrated in 1841. Three years later, in 1844, Selwyn summoned his small group of clergy to meet as a synod, in order to frame a set of rules for the Church. In England, there were complaints that Selwyn's synod was an infringement on the royal supremacy and thus illegal, but he persevered. 'My desire is', he wrote to friends in England in May 1845, 'in this country ... to try what the actual system of the Church of England can do, when disencumbered of its earthly load of seats in Parliament, Erastian compromises, corruptions of patronage, confusion of orders, synodless bishops, and an unorganized clergy'.¹⁹ Selwyn held a second synod in 1847, and ten years later, he held a conference of clergy, which prepared a new constitution, including provisions for a general synod and diocesan synods, for the Anglican Church in New Zealand. By 1858, the Anglican Church in New Zealand comprised four dioceses, with Selwyn as metropolitan.

Similar developments followed in the colonies in Australia. William Grant Broughton, a High Church Anglican, had in 1829 been appointed archdeacon of New South

¹⁹ W. P. Morrell, The Anglican Church in New Zealand (Dunedin, 1973), p. 48.

Wales, under the authority of the bishop of Calcutta. In early 1836, he was consecrated the first bishop of Australia, with an income provided by the SPG and the Crown. By 1847, largely through the work of the Colonial Bishoprics Fund, the number of bishops in Australia had increased to five, and the archbishop of Canterbury designated Broughton, who was now bishop of Sydney, as metropolitan. Of the five bishops, four were High Churchmen, who were attracted to Tractarian views of bishops as successors of the apostles and the Church as spiritually independent from the state. Late in 1850, Broughton convened a conference of the five Australian bishops, along with Bishop Selwyn of New Zealand, in Sydney. The conference discussed the potential benefits of regular diocesan and provincial synods, with representation of the clergy and laity. They also discussed a doctrinal issue, baptismal regeneration, which was then, as a result of the Gorham case, bitterly dividing the Church of England. Although technically not a synod, the Sydney conference of 1850 laid the foundation for future independent synodical government in Australia.²⁰ The first formal diocesan synod was convened by the bishop of Adelaide in 1855, and the first general synod of the Church of England in Australia met in Sydney in 1872.

There were similar movements towards synodical government in Canada and South Africa. In 1851, a year after the Sydney conference, George Mountain, bishop of Quebec, chaired a conference of the bishops of Canada; five of the eight bishops attended, and they recommended the formation of diocesan synods, the holding of regular provincial synods, and the appointment of a metropolitan. In 1853, the first diocesan synod was convened by

²⁰ E. D. Daw, 'Church and State in the Empire: The Conference of Australian Bishops 1850', Journal of Imperial and Commonwealth History V, 3 (1977), pp. 251-69; A. Cooper, 'The Australian Bishops and the Oxford Movement', in Brown and Nockles (eds.), Oxford Movement, pp. 99-113.

John Strachan, bishop of Toronto. Although regular synodical government was rendered difficult by the vast distances to be travelled in Canada, a first provincial synod for Eastern Canada was held in 1861, and the first general synod for the Church in Canada was held in 1893. The Church in South Africa developed independent synodical government under the forceful leadership of the High Churchman with Tractarian sympathies, Robert Gray, who was consecrated the first bishop of Cape Town in 1847. Gray convened his first diocesan synod (which included representatives of the laity) in 1856. Then, in his capacity as metropolitan, he famously convened the first provincial synod of South African bishops in 1863 in order to try one of their number, John William Colenso, bishop of Natal, for heresy – over his critical writings on the Pentateuch. The provincial synod ruled against Colenso and deposed him from his bishopric. Colenso, however, appealed to the British courts, which in 1864 decided that as Colenso had been appointed by the Crown, the provincial synod convened by Gray did not have jurisdiction over him. Undeterred by this judgement, the South African provincial synod proceeded to consecrate another bishop for Colenso's diocese, a diocese which then had two competing bishops until Colenso's death in 1883. Despite the tensions over the Colenso affair, Gray managed to consolidate the Church of the Province of South Africa, with five dioceses and regular synodical government, before his death in 1872.

By the later nineteenth century, then, independent Anglican Churches had emerged in the settlement colonies in Australia, New Zealand, Canada, and South Africa. While these Churches saw themselves as part of a world-wide Anglican communion, they were not established Churches; apart from a few remaining chaplaincies and subsidies, they had no legal connections to the imperial state. They came to value their independence from the state, and looked to the Protestant Episcopal Church of the United States as a model. In 1874, the imperial Parliament formally recognized their independence with the Colonial Clergy Act,

which allowed the consecration of colonial bishops without requiring an oath of obedience to the Archbishop of Canterbury. The connections of the colonial Churches to the mother Church of England were henceforth based – not on law – but on sentiment, doctrine, ecclesiology, and loyalty to the Empire. ‘It is given to the Church of England’, observed G. R. Wynne in 1901, ‘at once to minister to the souls of the colonists, and also to rivet, in the best of bonds, his affections to the old land of his fathers’.²¹ ‘It is the desire of the Church of England’, wrote Alfred Barry, former bishop of Sydney, in 1895, ‘true to her ancient spirit and traditions, to sit, not as a queen over spiritual dependencies, but as a mother among her daughter Churches’.²² The colonial Churches shared a commitment to promoting order, hierarchy, harmony, and cultivation among the settler populations. The colonial Anglican clergyman, observed the English broad church jurist and legal scholar, John Westlake, in 1868, is ‘the representative of civilization’. ‘And he is so’, Westlake added, ‘by virtue of his connexion with the Church at home, not through any legal status accorded to him in the colony’.²³ As Howard le Couteur has observed, the discourse relating to Anglicanism and the settlement colonies was ‘not about conversion and civilisation, but “cultivation”; how to transmit more fully to such colonies the benefits of . . . English/Anglican culture’.²⁴ The majority of the nineteenth-century colonial bishops were High Church, often Tractarian in

²¹ G. R. Wynne, The Church in Greater Britain (London, 1901), p. 66.

²² A. Barry, The Ecclesiastical Expansion of England in the Growth of the Anglican Communion (London, 1895), p. 27.

²³ J. Westlake, ‘The Church in the Colonies’, in W. L. Clay (ed.), Essays on Church Policy (London, 1868), p. 234.

²⁴ H. le Couteur, ‘Anglican High Churchmen and the Expansion of Empire’, Journal of Religious History, XXXII, 2 (2008), p. 196.

their theology, with high views of the bishops as successors of the apostles and vital to Church life. The growing confidence of the colonial Churches was reflected in their cathedrals, often majestic neo-Gothic buildings, such as Christ Church cathedral in Christchurch, New Zealand (built between 1862 and 1904), St James's cathedral in Toronto (built between 1850 and 1874), or the cathedral of St Michael and St George in Grahamstown, South Africa.

The Anglican Church in India

For many nineteenth-century Anglicans, Britain's rule in India could only be explained in providential terms. The rapid conquest of the vast sub-continent, located thousands of miles away from the British Isles, and with a huge and varied population, otherwise seemed inexplicable. When Anglican commentators referred to India, they generally spoke of a Britain's responsibilities, under God, to the peoples of India. And for many Anglicans, especially before 1857, the highest of these responsibilities was to Christianize India. 'Why should it be thought incredible', asked the Evangelical Anglican and former East India Company chaplain, Claudius Buchanan, in 1805, 'that Providence hath been pleased, in a course of years to subjugate this Eastern empire to the most civilised nation in the world, for this very purpose?' In 1813, with the renewal of the East India Company charter to govern India, Parliament responded to an Evangelical popular agitation by requiring the Company not only to open India to Christian missionary activity, but also to endow an established Anglican Church for India, including a bishopric in Calcutta, and archdeaconries in Bombay and Madras. The new Anglican establishment in India was controversial, with many believing Britain should not interfere with the beliefs of Hindus, Muslims, and other faith communities in India. The first bishop of Calcutta, Thomas Middleton, was consecrated very quietly in Lambeth Palace Chapel in 1814.

However, the Anglican Church in India steadily grew, with the CMS and SPG providing an increasing number of missionaries. Anglican schools were especially valued by the Indian elite. In 1820, Middleton, together with the SPG, established Bishop's College in Calcutta, which trained Indian converts for missionary work and produced Christian literature in the Indian languages. The arrival of an Evangelical Anglican governor-general, Lord William Bentinck, in 1829 brought a new level of co-operation between the state and the Anglican establishment, and a new willingness to impose Christian morals on Indian society. Bentinck's administration outlawed sati, or the ritual burning alive of widows, in 1829, and began a campaign that same year to suppress thuggee, or the ritualised murder and robbery of travellers by devotees of the Hindu goddess Kali. In 1833, at the renewal of the British East India Company Charter, Parliament enlarged the Anglican establishment, elevating the archdeaconries of Madras and Bombay into bishoprics, and making the bishop of Calcutta the metropolitan. By the later 1850s, the CMS was supporting 124 ordained missionaries and the SPG 53 ordained missionaries in India.²⁵ The mission had particular success in South India, where the CMS and SPG missionaries worked effectively together, in part through the leadership of the gifted Irish linguist and SPG missionary, Robert Caldwell. With its many schools and colleges, including schools for girls and women, Tirunelvēli would become known as the 'Oxford of South India'.

There were, however, major tensions between the Evangelical CMS missionaries and the bishops in India, especially after the arrival of the forceful Daniel Wilson as bishop of Calcutta in 1832. Although himself an Evangelical, Wilson was also a strong Churchman with high views of episcopal authority. For Wilson and his fellow bishops, the priority was to create a settled Anglican Church in India, with episcopal authority and a disciplined parish

²⁵ E. Storrow, India and Christian Missions (London, 1859), p. 43.

clergy, to ensure the nurture of the faithful in the Christian life. The bishops insisted on exercising authority over the CMS missionaries, including the authority to supervise missionaries and assign them to mission stations. The CMS missionaries, however, believed that they were accountable primarily to their local CMS committees, which were often led by laymen, and to the CMS parent committee in London. The CMS missionaries held that their committees, which provided the financial support for the missionaries, should have the authority to assign the missionaries to mission stations and to supervise them. Behind the CMS missionaries' desire for autonomy was a distrust of the bishops, with their often High Church ecclesiology, and, more important, a long-term commitment to forming an independent Indian Church, which they recognized might take a different form from the Church of England.

The tensions were largely resolved following the appointment in 1841 of the able ecclesiastical statesman, Henry Venn, as the London-based secretary of the CMS, a position he would hold for over thirty years. Venn believed that the goal of the missionary movement should be to help develop self-supporting, self-governing, and self-propagating 'native' Churches in Asia and Africa. However, Venn was also a loyal Anglican churchman and pragmatist, and he managed to convince the CMS local committees and missionaries in India to accept the authority of the Anglican bishops.²⁶ Under Bishop Wilson's leadership, meanwhile, the Anglican Church expanded its pastoral care, and had some 300 clergy and 200 churches in India and Ceylon by 1849. In 1847, the majestic Gothic St Paul's Cathedral was consecrated in Calcutta, as a symbol of an Anglican India.

²⁶ T. Yates, Venn and Victorian Bishops Abroad (Uppsala, 1978), pp. 30-42; C. P. Williams, The Ideal of the Self-Governing Church: A Study in Victorian Missionary Strategy (Leiden, 1990); Cnattingius, Bishops and Societies, pp. 159-85.

In May 1857, north-central India was swept by a series of mutinies among Indian sepoy soldiers, which quickly developed into a general uprising aimed at ending British rule and achieving Indian independence. The rising was accompanied by large-scale killings of European civilians, including missionaries and their families, as well as Indian Christian converts, before it was brutally suppressed by British and loyal Indian troops. The Indian ‘Mutiny’, as it was called in Britain, came as a profound shock to the British public, which was horrified by the killings of European women and children, and the intensity of hatred. Many Anglicans viewed the Mutiny as a divine summons to Britain to redouble its efforts to Christianise the sub-continent.²⁷ ‘Who can doubt’, proclaimed Samuel Wilberforce, bishop of Oxford, in an address in November 1857, ‘that God has so dealt with us, in order that we may . . . act, as we never yet have acted, with true Christian zeal and courage in the administration of our Eastern Empire?’²⁸ For many others, however, the major cause of the Mutiny had been not divine disfavour, but rather Hindu and Muslim resentment against the Christian missionaries. After the Mutiny, the imperial state adopted a policy of strict religious neutrality in governing India. In the Royal Proclamation of 1858, while the Queen affirmed her own Christian faith, she disclaimed ‘alike the right and desire to impose our convictions on any of our subjects’. The state also made it clear that it would provide no additional grants to the Anglican establishment in India.²⁹ Many British residents, moreover, became convinced that the Anglican Church should restrict its ministry to the Europeans and cease its

²⁷ B. Stanley, ‘Christian Responses to the Indian Mutiny of 1857’, Studies in Church History, XX (1983), pp. 277-89.

²⁸ S. Wilberforce, Speeches on Missions, ed. H. Rowley (London, 1874), p. 106.

²⁹ G. Cotton, bishop of Calcutta, to S. Wilberforce, 8 July 1858, Wilberforce Papers, Bodleian Library, Oxford, c.20, fos. 53-6.

missions to the Indian population, as these only created resentments and stoked communal violence. It should be a Church for Europeans. This view of the Anglican establishment was reflected in the exclusive European composition of many of its churches in India. Arriving as bishop of Calcutta in 1900, James Welldon had expected to see many Indians in the cathedral congregation. However, 'except on rare occasions, he saw few or none at all'.³⁰

Despite the waning state support, the Anglican Church continued its missions and experienced modest growth in the later nineteenth century, with assistance from the Colonial Bishoprics Fund, the SPG, and the CMS. After the Mutiny, the SPG and CMS had rushed to rebuild their mission stations. New Anglican bishoprics were formed at Lahore (1877), Rangoon (1877), Tavancore and Cochin (1879), Chota-Nagpur (1890), Lucknow (1893), Tirunelvēli and Madura (1896), and Nagpur (1903). The Church established schools and hospitals, including a hospital at Quetta, founded in 1885, which under the skilled eye surgeon, Henry Holland, became celebrated for its innovative work in cataract surgery. However, all the nineteenth-century Anglican bishops in India were British or Irish and the Church leadership remained closely identified with the Empire and a paternalistic, civilizing mission idea. There was little movement towards developing an independent Indian Anglican Church. And for believers in the providential nature of Britain's dominion in India, the numbers of Indian converts to Christianity, in proportion to India's immense population, remained disappointingly small.

A bishopric of Colombo was established in 1845 in Ceylon, where the CMS had been conducting a mission since 1818 and the SPG was active from about 1840. Ceylon was a Crown colony, and the bishopric of Colombo was not part of the established Anglican

³⁰ B. Palmer, Imperial Vineyard: The Anglican Church in India under the Raj from the Mutiny to Partition (Lewes, Sussex, 1999), p. 35.

Church in India, although it was under the metropolitan authority of the bishop of Calcutta. The CMS dominated the mission in Ceylon, and had a leading role in the multi-denominational Tamil Coolie Mission, established in 1854 with support from local planters for mission work among the migrant labourers in the coffee plantations. Ceylon was a difficult mission field. There was a popular belief, wrote one CMS missionary in 1868, that 'Christianity is an upstart religion, which has no vitality, and which, if unsupported by the ruling powers, cannot stand'.³¹ The consecration of a young Oxford High Churchman, Reginald Copleston, as bishop of Colombo in late 1875 led to a serious conflict, as the 'Boy Bishop' attempted to regularise ecclesiastical government by placing the CMS missionaries, including those of the Tamil Coolie Mission, under the authority of chaplains ministering to European planters. The predominantly Evangelical CMS missionaries resisted Copleston's plans for them, while they also opposed his ritualism and sacramental piety. Some CMS missionaries formed separatist churches and a major schism was only averted by the mediation of a committee of English bishops convened by the Archbishop of Canterbury. In 1881, the government of Ceylon decided to disestablish the Anglican Church and end further subsidies. Further east, British control of the Straits, including Singapore and parts of Malaysia, led in 1855 to the creation of the bishopric of Labuan, which from 1868 became the bishopric of Singapore, Labuan and Sarawak. The Anglican chaplains ministered mainly to the European soldiers, officials and merchants in Singapore and Penang, although the SPG conducted missions, mainly among Tamils and Chinese migrants, from about 1860.

In India, the CMS and SPG were by the 1870s experiencing difficulties in recruiting male ordained missionaries for the India mission; however, this was more than offset by an

³¹ E. Stock, The History of the Church Missionary Society, 3 vols. (London, 1899), i, p. 218.

influx of single women missionaries, many of them trained at the Evangelical Mildmay Deaconesses Centre, or at the High Church SPG deaconess training house in south London. There was a growing recognition that the seclusion of women in Muslim and Hindu homes meant that women missionaries, especially medical missionaries, were vital in bringing Christian teachings to the female population. In 1880, the Church of England Zenana Missionary Society was formed, with close links to the CMS, to evangelize among Indian women in their homes. As Jeffrey Cox has shown, the SPG sent over 300 unmarried women missionaries to Delhi and Lahore in the century after 1850, more than six-times the number of male missionaries. Many became members of Anglican sisterhood communities, such as St Stephens in Delhi or St Hilda's in Lahore, where the women lived communal lives in compounds and went out for household visiting, teaching, or medical service.³² Edith Langridge ('Mother Edith'), an accomplished Oxford-educated classicist, linguist and skilled nurse, arrived in India in 1903 and for forty years served, with impressive strength and versatility, the Anglican Sisterhood of the Epiphany.

In the 1870s, in response to the relatively small numbers of converts in India, some liberal, or Broad Church thinkers within the Church of England began exploring fresh approaches to the Anglican mission in India. Among them was the Cambridge professor, Brooke Foss Westcott, who argued in an address in late 1872 that God's purpose for the Anglican Church in India might not be to Christianize India, but to nurture dialogue and understanding between the faiths of the East and West. 'God', Westcott argued, 'has fitted us as a people and as a church . . . to be the interpreters of the East to the West, and of the West

³² J. Cox, The British Missionary Enterprise since 1700 (New York, 2008), pp. 188-95.

to the East, to be the witnesses and heralds of truth recognised as manifold.³³ Westcott envisaged the creation of a new community in India, in connection with Cambridge University, to promote inter-religious understanding; it would be a ‘new Alexandria’ and a melting pot of theologies. The following year, in 1873, the Oxford professor of comparative philology, F. Max Müller, gave a public lecture on missions at Westminster Abbey. He offered a similar vision of mission, in which the aim would not be to convert the peoples of India from Hinduism or Islam to Christianity; rather, missionaries should seek to live out their faith through self-less service among the poor, and engage in inter-faith dialogue. The results, Müller suggested, might not be individual conversions, but rather the encouragement of ethical movements in Hinduism and Islam, so that through shared service to humanity all faiths might be elevated.³⁴ In 1876, inspired by such ideas, some members of Cambridge University formed the Cambridge University Missionary Brotherhood in Delhi, which combined educational work and social service in the slums of Delhi with theological dialogue with Hindus and Muslims. In 1879, members of Oxford University, including several Anglo-Catholics, formed an Oxford University Missionary Brotherhood for work in Calcutta, which also combined educational work, social service, and inter-religious dialogue. Among the members of the Cambridge University Missionary Brotherhood was C. F. Andrews, an Anglican priest who arrived in Delhi in 1904, immersed himself in inter-faith dialogue, became a confidant of M. K. Gandhi, and later renounced his Anglican orders. The missionary brotherhoods, however, were but one element in the work of the Anglican Church

³³ B. F. Westcott, ‘The Universities in Relation to Missionary Work’ in B. F. Westcott, On Some Points in the Religious Office of the Universities (London, 1873), p. 68.

³⁴ F. Max Müller, ‘Westminster Lecture on Missions’, in F. Max Müller, Selected Essays on Language, Mythology and Religion, 2 vols. (London, 1881), ii, pp. 46-86.

in India, and some were critical of their approach. ‘It may suggest the idea’, observed Alfred Barry in 1895, ‘only too congenial to the Hindu mind, that Christianity is only a philosophy to be intellectually learnt, or a morality which can be disassociated from its doctrines’.³⁵ For many Anglicans, the ideal remained a Christian India.

Missions and Missionary Bishops

In 1854, Bishop Selwyn of New Zealand gave an emotive series of four sermons at Cambridge University on ‘The Work of Christ in the World’, appealing to university students to offer themselves for service as missionaries or colonial clergy. There could be no higher calling, he proclaimed, than to be a ‘soldier of the Cross’ and ‘to fight manfully under his Lord’s banner, and to bear it to the utmost bounds of the habitable globe’.³⁶ Selwyn’s appeal had a particular impact because of his remarkable story. A formidable ‘muscular Christian’, he carried on an active mission to the Maori of New Zealand, travelling extensively and defending Maori rights. In one six-month period in 1842, Selwyn travelled 2,277 miles around New Zealand, by foot, horseback, and boat. From 1847, moreover, he began making regular missionary voyages in a schooner among the Pacific islands. For Selwyn, who was a High Churchman, bishops should lead missions, as they had in the early Church, and he personally led missionary expeditions far beyond the formal borders of the British empire. Later, in 1856, Selwyn was joined by John Coleridge Patteson, another High Churchman, who served with great courage first as Selwyn’s missionary chaplain and then, from 1861, as missionary bishop of Melanesia – until he was martyred by Nukapu islanders in 1871.

³⁵ Barry, Ecclesiastical Expansion of England, pp. 137-8.

³⁶ G. A. Selwyn, The Work of Christ in the World: Four Sermons Preached before the University of Cambridge (Cambridge, 1855), p. 46.

A few years after Selwyn's Cambridge sermons, another missionary hero delivered a memorable set of lectures at Cambridge University. This was the African missionary, David Livingstone, who had recently returned from an epic journey in which he traversed Africa from east to west, and explored the course of the Zambezi River. For his Cambridge audience, he revived the ideal of the Niger expedition of 1841, and its vision of ending the slave trade by bringing the Bible and the plough to Africa. He begged his hearers to direct their attention to Africa. 'I go back to Africa', he proclaimed, 'to make an open path for commerce and Christianity; do you carry out the work which I have begun. I LEAVE IT WITH YOU'.³⁷ In response to these appeals, members of both Cambridge and Oxford Universities now undertook to support a mission up the Zambezi, to regions which were then outside the Crown's dominions. They were joined by members of Durham University and Trinity College, Dublin, to form an Anglican Universities' Mission to Central Africa (UMCA). The Convocation of Canterbury agreed that the Central African Mission should be headed by a missionary bishop, and in early 1861, Charles Frederick Mackenzie, an Anglican missionary serving in Natal, was consecrated bishop of Central Africa by the South African bishops at a service in Cape Town.

A few weeks later, Mackenzie and his party of UMCA missionaries met up with Livingstone and a state-supported expedition of explorers at the Kongone mouth of the Zambezi, and together they moved inland to end the slave trade by bringing commerce and Christianity into Central Africa. But both the mission and the expedition were soon enveloped in tragedy. The Zambezi proved largely inaccessible to Livingstone's steamboats, and the expedition was weakened by illness and infighting. Livingstone left the missionaries,

³⁷ D. Livingstone, Dr Livingstone's Cambridge Lectures, ed. W. Monk, 2nd edn. (London, 1860), p. 168.

who established a mission station in the Shire uplands. There the missionaries used armed force to liberate slaves being driven to the coast; it seemed to them immoral not to free slaves when they had the opportunity. However, by liberating slaves, who had been captured by local warlords, the missionaries became parties in the local warfare, which undermined their mission to bring the gospel to all. In January 1862, Mackenzie died of malaria, and the mission was left leaderless and adrift. A new bishop, William George Tozer, was consecrated in Westminster Abbey to replace Mackenzie, and in 1864 Tozer withdrew the mission from the Zambezi to Zanzibar. The Zambezi expedition, like the Niger expedition twenty years before, had been a costly failure. Many blamed the failure on Livingstone, whose wife, Mary, had died of malaria while accompanying the expedition; Livingstone soon disappeared into the African interior. But the Universities' Central African Mission continued, building a cathedral in Zanzibar on the site of a former slave market, sending missionaries into the interior of East Africa, establishing mission stations, and providing support and schools for freed slaves. It remained Anglo-Catholic in ethos, with emphasis on episcopal authority.³⁸

In 1864, soon after Bishop Mackenzie's death by the Zambezi, another missionary bishop was consecrated to lead an Anglican mission to regions of West Africa that were then outside the Crown's dominions. This was Samuel Ajayi Crowther, the first African Anglican bishop. While Mackenzie's missionary bishopric owed its inspiration to the UMCA, Crowther's missionary bishopric had its origin in the Evangelical CMS, and the vision of its secretary, Henry Venn. Crowther had been liberated from slave traders as a child and landed in Sierra Leone, where he was baptized. After accompanying the ill-fated Niger expedition of 1841 as an interpreter, Crowther attended the CMS training college at Islington, and was

³⁸ F. Winspear, 'A Short History of the Universities Mission to Central Africa', Nyasaland Journal, IX, 1 (1956), pp. 11-50.

ordained in 1843. He accompanied further exploratory expeditions up the Niger in 1854, 1857, and 1859, and translated the Book of Common Prayer and the Bible into the Yoruba language. One reason for consecrating Crowther as a missionary bishop was that it meant he would not have authority over European missionaries, most of whom would have refused to serve under an African bishop. More important, Henry Venn of the CMS hoped that Crowther's missionary bishopric would lead to an independent West African Anglican Church.

Crowther presided over an exclusively African clergy. He established a number of mission stations, where there were some mass conversions, and he nurtured good relations with local rulers. Scholarly, devout and gentle, Crowther was blameless in his personal life. However, by the late 1870s, there were reports of scandals and irregularities in the Niger region under Crowther's authority, including immorality among some African clergy and agents, involvement of the clergy in private trading, especially the trade in gin, and heterodox theology among the convert congregations. While many of the reports were false or exaggerated, some were not. In 1890, following an investigation by the CMS Finance Committee, there was a purge of leading African clergy, including Crowther's son, which led to a schism in the West African Church. Crowther, now in his mid-eighties, was devastated by the purge, seeing it as a condemnation of his life's work; he suffered a stroke and died in late 1891. The CMS became convinced by the Niger scandal that British supervision was necessary – because of African 'weakness' – and an Englishman was consecrated as Crowther's successor.³⁹

³⁹ A. Hastings, The Church in Africa 1450-1950 (Oxford, 1994), pp. 338-93; Williams, Ideal of the Self-Governing Church, pp. 90-101, 125-97.

As Andrew Porter has shown, a major factor in the CMS purge of the African Church in Yorubaland was a new spirit in Anglican Evangelicalism from the mid-1870s, associated with the Keswick conferences, and their ‘holiness teachings’ concerning the prospects of a ‘higher life’ for the converted Christian – a life characterised by a complete trust in God and freedom from any desire to sin. In the mission fields, this higher life included belief that God would provide for the missionary’s every need, both spiritual and material. There was an emphasis on personal character and the potential of the individual Christian, when filled with God’s Spirit, to achieve momentous change. Keswick influences spread to the universities, especially Cambridge, where they inspired a new generation of missionaries, many of them members of the Cambridge Inter-Collegiate Christian Union, formed in 1877, or educated at Cambridge’s Ridley Hall, an Evangelical training college established in 1881. The new-style missionaries were confident, uncompromising, and vocal critics of what they perceived as a worldly spirit in existing missions. They embraced a commitment to the Empire, including paternalistic attitudes toward what were termed the ‘child’ races, which needed to be protected from traders and nurtured under imperial tutelage. Keswick Evangelicalism contributed to an increase in the numbers of missionaries and a late Victorian missionary boom. The CMS, as Brian Stanley has observed, sent out 50 per cent more missionaries between 1880 and 1904 than it had during the first eighty years of its history. This included a significant increase in female CMS missionaries, many drawn to the African mission. By 1899, the CMS had 1,134 missionaries, of whom 281 were single women and 323 were missionary wives – which meant that women made up 53 per cent of the total.⁴⁰

⁴⁰ B. Stanley, The Bible and the Flag (Leicester, 1990), p. 80; J. Murray, ‘The Role of Women in the Church Missionary Society, 1799-1917’, in K. Ward and B. Stanley (eds.),

Many Keswick Evangelicals were drawn to the faith mission ideal, with its pre-millennialist belief in the imminent return of Christ, and its commitment to communicate the gospel to as many people as possible before that event. The faith missions relied on small teams of itinerant missionaries, who would adopt the clothing, diet, and customs of the people among whom they evangelised. Their aim was to evangelize the world in their generation, or in other words to preach, with a sense of urgency, the gospel to every inhabitant. Among the new-style Evangelicals was the CMS missionary, Graham Wilmot Brooke, who went to the Niger in 1889, and took a leading role in criticisms of the Niger Church.⁴¹ In 1890, Brooke convinced the CMS to support a faith mission, the Sudan Mission Party, which he proposed to lead to the upper reaches to the Niger and then into the Sudan, evangelizing among the largely Muslim population. He renounced the ideal of bringing Christianity and commerce to the African interior; his aim was simply to bring the gospel to as many as possible. But Brooke died of fever in 1892 before reaching the Sudan.

Britain's occupation of Egypt in 1882, and its conquest of the Sudan in 1899, opened new mission fields in predominantly Islamic lands. Indeed, by the 1890s, the British Empire ruled over more Muslims than any other state, including the Ottoman Empire. For some, this meant that the Anglican Church now had a special mission to Islam. Many Anglicans were

The Church Mission Society and World Christianity, 1799-1999 (Grand Rapids, MI, 2000), pp. 82, 89.

⁴¹ A. Porter, 'Cambridge, Keswick, and Late-Nineteenth-Century Attitudes to Africa', Journal of Imperial and Commonwealth History, V, 1 (1976), pp. 5-34; A. Porter, 'Evangelical Enthusiasm, Missionary Motivation and West African in the Late Nineteenth Century: The Career of G. W. Brooke', Journal of Imperial and Commonwealth History, VI, 1 (1977), pp. 23-46.

attracted to the story of General Charles Gordon, an Evangelical and anti-slavery activist, who had been killed in 1885 at the fall of Khartoum, where he had been sent to evacuate Egyptians from the Sudan following a Muslim rising. For his admirers, Gordon had died a martyr's death while endeavouring to rescue Muslims, and his example inspired Anglican engagement with Islam. The CMS had supported a small mission in Egypt, mainly proselytising among Coptic Christians, from 1824 to 1862. The first Anglican church in Egypt was consecrated in 1855 in Alexandria. The CMS returned to Egypt in 1887, following the British occupation, with a new confidence – to establish schools and hospitals and to evangelize among Muslims. In the later 1890s, two admirers of Gordon, Douglas Thornton and William Temple Gairdner, went to Cairo as CMS missionaries to evangelise among students and educated Muslims. Thornton died in 1907, but Gairdner continued working in Cairo, producing a steady stream of publications which were aimed at both communicating Christianity to Muslims and promoting Anglican understanding of Islam.⁴² Following the British occupation of the Sudan, the CMS established a Gordon Memorial Mission, while a large Anglican church, which later became a cathedral, was built in Khartoum in Gordon's memory between 1904 and 1912. The missions in Egypt and the Sudan were under the authority of the Anglican bishop of Jerusalem. The joint British-Prussian Jerusalem bishopric, established in 1841, had dissolved in 1881. But an exclusively Anglican bishopric of Jerusalem was established in 1887, with Francis Blyth serving as bishop from 1887 to 1914. The Anglican St George's College and church complex, with schools, hospital, library and clergy house, was built in an English style between 1895 and 1912. Many Anglican Evangelicals, including those influenced by Keswick, continued to believe that the Jerusalem

⁴² M. T. Shelley, 'Temple Gairdner of Cairo Revisited', Islam and Christian-Muslim Relations, X, 3 (1999), pp. 261-78.

bishopric was destined by providence for a special role in the return of the Jews to the Holy Land, the conversion of Jews and Muslims, and the second coming of Christ.

From Imperial to World Anglicanism

The language of imperial Christianity and the providential mission of the British Empire remained strong in the last years of the nineteenth and first years of the twentieth century. There was a sense that the empire promoted the spread of Anglicanism, and that Anglicanism elevated the empire with a higher mission. 'As a rule', wrote Alfred Barry in 1895, 'the mission of the [Anglican] Church has been to interpenetrate with a diviner life and unity the ever-widening sphere of English power and responsibility.'⁴³ For some observers, the Anglican Church was a vital bond of empire. 'Our empire', noted Bernard Wilson in 1900, 'is composed of absolutely diverse peoples spread over the five continents of the world. No natural bond of union exists which can cement these heterogeneous elements into one.' 'Only the inspiring force of religion', he continued, 'and the sound moral code which flows from it, can weld into one great whole so composite a State.' For Wilson, the Anglican Church should be the 'Church of the British Empire'.⁴⁴ The vision of an imperial Anglicanism uniting the settlement colonies, triumphing over Hinduism and Islam, and 'civilising' the 'child races' had a powerful appeal. Henry Montgomery, former bishop of Tasmania and from 1901 secretary of the SPG, was an ardent supporter of imperial Christianity. His

⁴³ Barry, Ecclesiastical Expansion of England, p. 9.

⁴⁴ B. Wilson, 'The Church and the Empire', in H. Hensley Henson (ed.), Church Problems: A View of Modern Anglicanism (London, 1900), pp. 372, 393.

professed aim, he informed the SPG standing committee, was ‘to revolutionise Church ideals and make the ancient Church of England more completely an Imperial Church’.⁴⁵

However, many other early twentieth-century Anglicans perceived the British Empire and the Church as fundamentally different, with the one based on trade, national interest, and temporal power, and the other on spiritual truths, sacrifice, and eternal prospects. As Brian Stanley and Andrew Porter have shown, Christians, including Anglicans, could be among the most vocal critics of imperialism.⁴⁶ Missionaries often witnessed at first-hand the cruelties and injustices perpetrated by traders, settlers, colonial legislatures, and imperial governors upon the peoples of Australasia, South Asia, and the Americas. They saw the effects of imperial economic policies in impoverishing millions, or in forcing the mass migrations of peoples to work in the plantations or mines – and they also observed closely the emerging movements for independence in India and Africa. They understood that the use of providentialist language linking British imperial expansion and the spread of Christianity was presumptuous. ‘I believe’, wrote G. A. Lefroy of the Cambridge Mission to Delhi (and later bishop of Calcutta) in 1879, ‘that our position as the ruling power puts a dead weight on the missionary enterprise which nothing but the direct grace of God can possibly enable us to lift’.⁴⁷ By the early years of the twentieth century, the darker side of imperialism, including a

⁴⁵ S. Maughan, ‘An Archbishop for Greater Britain: Bishop Montgomery, missionary imperialism and the SPG, 1897-1915’, in D. O’Connor (ed.), Three Centuries of Mission: The United Society for the Propagation of the Gospel 1701-2000 (London, 2000), p. 362.

⁴⁶ Stanley, The Bible and the Flag; A. Porter, Religion versus Empire? British Protestant Missionaries and Overseas Expansion, 1700-1914 (Manchester, 2004).

⁴⁷ Quoted in J. Cox, Imperial Fault Lines: Christianity and Colonial Power in India, 1818-1940 (Stanford, 2002), p. 221.

pervasive racism, was becoming all too evident – for example, in the revelations of atrocities in the Congo associated with the collection of rubber. For many Anglicans, there was an imperative now to disentangle Anglicanism from Englishness, and the Church from the Empire, and to work instead for a truly global Anglican Communion.

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